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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

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'Arafat Accused of Monopolizing Power, Laxity

91AE0582A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
8 Aug 91 p 5

[Text] Kuwait—A dissident Palestinian group which has split with the Palestine National Liberation Movement (Fatah), under the name Fatah Independent Cadres, issued a statement condemning Yasir 'Arafat's leadership of Palestinian national activity. The statement, of which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT obtained a copy yesterday, says these cadres blame 'Arafat for fumbling in political action, abandoning armed struggle, and failing to achieve national unity.

The statement says the Palestinian nationalist personality has developed through the gun barrel and, as a result, the Palestinian revolution won the respect of world opinion. The statement accused 'Arafat of turning Fatah and the PLO into a private fiefdom subject to an "autocratic leadership institution." It also accused him of corruption, nepotism, promoting relatives and favorites and showering them with money from the Palestinian revolution's funds.

The statement accused Yasir 'Arafat of autocratic decision-making and running the PLO according to his whims. It also said that his lust for power has driven him to monopolizing the following positions:

- Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee.
- Commander in Chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces.
- Commander in Chief of the storm troops.
- Head of the PLO military department since the death of Zuhayr Muhsin.
- Deputy Commander in Chief of the storm troops since the martyrdom of commander Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].
- Member of Fatah Central Committee.
- PLO financial controller.
- In charge of Fatah Movement central media and the PLO unified media.
- In charge of the "Western Sector" since the martyrdom of Abu Jihad.
- Chief of Staff of the Palestine Liberation Army [PLA].
- The "sole" person in charge of expenditure in the financial administration of the PLA from the Palestine National Fund.
- In charge of school grants in Fatah and the PLO.
- In charge of medical grants in Fatah and the PLO.
- In charge of military purchases.
- In charge of investments in Fatah.
- In charge of financial assistance.
- In charge of Fatah's Military Council.
- In charge of the PLO Higher Military Council.
- In charge of the Lebanese arena politically, militarily, and organizationally.
- In charge of Nabulus (north) organizational committee in the occupied territories.
- In charge of the committee on organizational control in the Gaza Strip.

- In charge of the al-Qudwah ('Arafat's family), that is the family patriarch.
- In charge of the intifadah higher committee.
- Chief Secretary of all the labor and professional unions and the PLO.
- In charge of ambassadors abroad.
- In charge of the preparatory committee for the Fatah Congress since the departure of Abu Jihad.
- In charge of African affairs in the political department.
- In charge of the officers' committee—promoting the military cadres.
- The incumbent in charge of the central security organ following the departure of martyr Abu al Hawl [Hayil 'Abd-al-Hamid].
- The incumbent in charge of the unified security organ following the departure of martyr Abu Iyyad [Salah Khalaf].
- In charge of [PLO] military attaches throughout the world, of the presidential security apparatus, and of Force 17.

The statement also accused 'Arafat of excluding capable and trained cadres from the Palestinian military establishment and appointing persons lacking experience and capability in military posts.

In this regard, the statement denounced the appointment of Ahmad 'Affanah Abu al-Mu'tasim, a former construction officer in the Jordanian army, as deputy chief of staff. The statement cited names of other officers who were appointed in senior posts simply because they are close to 'Arafat.

The statement calls on the Palestinians to stand firm in the face of the plan that aims at liquidating the Palestinian military establishment. It also calls for the revival of the storm troops, so that they will continue their commando [fedayee] action on the Palestinian soil. The statement also condemned the so-called management of the Western Sector inside that establishment, hinting that officers of this sector have disappeared under mysterious circumstances. The statement also said that 'Arafat has used funds at his disposal to corrupt people in the occupied territories, especially those working in the press. 'Arafat, the statement added, has also given financial aid to the Hamas religious movement in order to strike at Fatah in the occupied territories, on the grounds that the movement is no longer loyal to him but loyal to martyr Khalil al-Wazir.

Details on 'Arafat, Khalid al-Hasan Tensions

91AE0576A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
13 Aug 91 pp 20-21

[Text] Tunis—As the process of solving the Middle East problem is making headway, the PLO is heading toward an acute crisis that might lead to the collapse of its unity that has survived 28 years. Although over the years of its life the PLO suffered numerous divisions and splits, the most violent of which was the expulsion of its forces from Beirut. But, it was able to emerge from that

impending "earthquake" safely. If matters continue to proceed the way they are doing now, it will probably signal its end. Its fate will be similar to that of the renowned Government of all Palestine at the beginning of the fifties.

Perhaps what helped the PLO to overcome past attempts to split it, which were numerous and serious, was the fact that the majority of the active Arab countries who constantly stood against the dissidents sided with the legitimate leadership and cadres. What applied to the Arab countries also applied to the Communist countries, the Islamic countries, the nonaligned countries, and the West European countries. Moreover, previous attempts at division were confined to the Fatah movement and some of the ineffective leaders.

But what makes the signs of dissension serious is the fact that the Palestinian problem itself is standing at a serious crossroads. Most differences of the past were caused by individual sensitivities and personal ambitions. But the differences this time have a far reaching implications. If conditions in the past helped patch up matters and overcame much of the obstacles, the present state of affairs tilts the balance more toward dissension than unity and makes disagreement likely more than agreement. Moreover these conditions have put weapons in the hands of the dissenting leadership that were not available to them in previous attempts.

But, are the talks about this problem mere illusions and speculations resulting from differing interpretations and from the stands that have become increasingly alienated following the Gulf war, or are there indeed realities and facts indicating that behind the smoke of differences there is a blazing fire inside the PLO?

A few days ago, Khalid al-Hasan (Abu al-Sa'id), member of Fatah Central Council and chairman of the PNC [Palestine National Council] Foreign Relations Committee, arrived in Amman suddenly. Before meeting the Jordanian monarch, he made a statement that was carried by western Arabic-language news agencies and radios in which he called for the need to make changes in the existing Palestinian leadership and to bring in a substitute leadership that would be able, as he put it, to adapt to the new conditions and accept the facts that the recent war has created. He stressed that those who do not live in the [refugee] camps are no longer capable of leading those who live in them.

In the past months since the Gulf war ended and resulted in the present situation, Abu al-Sa'id has been waging an unrelenting campaign of statements against PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and his supporters because of their attitude toward the Gulf war and support for Saddam Husayn against the allied countries. He described this stand as having brought for the Palestinian people, including those who live in Kuwait and the Gulf countries, nothing but afflictions and destruction, harmed the cause, and isolated the PLO on both the Arab and international levels.

Because his stand differs from that of the majority of Palestinian officials, Abu al-Sa'id has been cutting back on his presence in Tunisia where 'Arafat and senior Fatah and PLO officials live. Before coming to Jordan in order to live in it, he preferred to go to Morocco, from which he continued his activities and travels to European and Arab capitals and to call for changing the present Palestinian leadership and substituting it with a leadership capable of adapting to the new realities following the Gulf war.

Abu al-Sa'id continued his media war against the Palestinian leadership while on its part the leadership was responding to him covertly and publicly as well as in private and official meetings. This went on until the Fatah Revolutionary Council held its recent meeting a few days ago in Tunis, when a heated confrontation and an explosion took place. Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] strongly attacked his opponent, accusing him of treason, conspiracy, and mistrust. Khalid al-Hasan replied strongly as well, telling 'Arafat that he no longer has anything in common with him except the legitimate [PLO] cadres, and that he is not bound by his leadership, his policy, or his directives. This confrontation was expected to be the end of the dispute raging between the two men, had not members of the Revolutionary Council intervened to patch things up as best as they could. Thus the divorce has been postponed for some time later. Nevertheless, Abu al-Sa'id did not tone down his campaign against 'Arafat; he continued to call for a change in the present leadership. He initiated a series of Arab contacts in order to explain his viewpoint and boost his political and moral stand.

Although many believe that the dispute between Abu al-Sa'id and Abu 'Ammar lies in the difference in both men's views on the Gulf war, people well-informed about the Gulf war, believe otherwise. They say that the dispute that with time has developed into a conflict goes back to the beginnings. Khalid al-Hasan was always favored patience before igniting armed struggle, while 'Arafat was in a hurry. 'Arafat even once carried out an operation in Hebron in the West Bank at his own initiative and without the knowledge of his command. That was about a year before the [Aylabun] crossing operation, which was considered to be the first in the contemporary Palestinian revolution.

In subsequent years the dispute between Abu al-Sa'id and Abu 'Ammar had its ups and downs, depending on the fluctuations and developments of the Palestine problem. The first had his own opinion that differed with the rest of the Palestinian military leadership concerning the conduct of fedayeen operations in Jordan, and the famous September events, as well as regarding Communist factions joining the PLO, and the PLO's alliance with some of the radical Arab countries.

It is worth noting here that Abu al-Sa'id assumed directorship of the PLO Political Department after the armed factions took control of the PLO in 1968, but he was soon relieved of this post because of his views and

stances that did not please many leaders and officials. His policy also infuriated the armed factions and many in the Fatah movement, of which he was one of the first leaders and founders.

It can be said that Abu al-Sa'id's stand following the famous September events in Jordan and his publicly advocating the need to resort to political action rather than military action, as well as his call for expelling the extremist and Communist factions from the alliance within the PLO, has brought upon him the wrath of the majority in the Palestinian arena.

Abu al-Sa'id's relationship with Kuwait goes back to the early days preceding the emergence of this state and its rise to the status it has reached. He worked for many years as an engineer in the municipality of the city of Kuwait and remained in this position even after he became a leader in Fatah and the PLO. Because of his old and close relationship with Kuwaiti officials, their trust in him, and their appreciation of his efforts, he was granted Kuwaiti citizenship, which his children also obtained later.

Abu al-Sa'id also believes that he had early realized and foresaw that what happened to the PLO in Beirut was bound to happen and that the course the Palestinian leadership pursued would only lead to the reality the Palestinians are now experiencing. He adopted a different attitude with regard to the bloody conflict between the PLO and Damascus after the split in Fatah movement in the spring of 1983. At that time many people accused him of colluding with certain Arab quarters in order to replace Abu 'Ammar who was besieged in Tripoli in northern Lebanon.

In addition to these personal, ideological, and political differences, Abu al-Sa'id also differed with Abu 'Ammar regarding organizational structures inside Fatah movement and the PLO. The first accused the latter of exploiting his influence in order to control both Fatah and the PLO, while the latter accused the first of involvement in some ambiguous relationships, of never having entered a single Palestinian battle, of being so detached from the Palestinian concerns, and of spending so much on his movements and travel that would be enough to finance the expenses of an entire [refugee] camp.

Palestinian quarters point out that one of stages of the basic conflict between the two men began following the exodus from Beirut when Abu al-Sa'id was elected at the movement's central committee meeting to be in charge of media affairs. Apparently this choice did not please Abu 'Ammar and so he divested him of all powers and set against him heads of the media branches, until he lost patience, his enthusiasm waned, and once again chose seclusion. He did not carry out any specific activities outside the leadership meetings.

As the conflict is nearing the moment of confrontation that might in one way or another lead to dividing the PLO and Fatah movement, knowledgeable sources say that Abu 'Ammar is standing in the confrontation arena

alone in these difficult and critical circumstances. Of all the historical leaders only Faruq al-Qaddumi (Abu al-Lutf), head of the PLO political department, definitely stands with him. Since the beginnings of the eighties he lost successively Majid Abu Sharar, Sa'd Sayil (Abu al-Walid), Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), and Hayil 'Abd-al-Hamid (Abu al-Hul). Earlier he lost Abu 'Ali Iyad, Kamal 'Adwan, and Abu Yusuf al-Najjar.

Well-informed sources also say that two of the historical leaders, Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu Mazin) and Muhammad Ghunaym (Abu Mahir) are standing halfway between the two bitter opponents, although it is believed that they will eventually side with Abu 'Ammar. With regard to Salim al-Za'nun, he is still hesitant and has not yet made up his mind. Meanwhile, the second-rank leaders are divided. Abu al-Mundhir, 'Abdallah al-Ifranji, al-Hajj Nasir, and Nabil Sha'ath support Khalid al-Hasan's views, while al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, 'Abbas Zaki, Hani al-Hasan [Khalid al-Hasan's brother], Hakam Bal-'awi, Umm-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir's widow], and Ahmad Jihad stand with Yasir 'Arafat.

The other factions inside and outside the PLO will probably play a basic role in the conflict. The attitude of this or that faction depends on the success of the steps toward a solution. If the settlement makes tangible progress on the ground, then there is no doubt that some of these factions will side with Abu al-Sa'id. But if matters remain static, then Abu 'Ammar will tip the balance. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], the rest of the other fronts, and Hamas movement will stand with him on the ground that he is the party that is adhering to armed struggle and adopting a hard-line stand on the proposed solutions, while his opponent is pursuing the new realistic path that resulted from the Gulf war.

With regard to the occupied territories, the pivotal issue, as it is said, the situation there represents a major weak point for Abu al-Sa'id. Because of his disposition, his tasks, his proposals, and the fields of his actions, his relations [with the occupied territories] are almost non-existent. While Abu 'Ammar, because of the financial resources, of his being the commander in chief, and the person directly responsible for the western sector [as published], he holds all the strings in the occupied territories. For this reason statements by Faysal al-Husayni, Hanan 'Ashrawi, Zakariya al-Agha, and Radwan Abu 'Ayyash seem to be closer to 'Arafat's views than to Khalid al-Hasan's.

Has the rift become inevitable? Some people say everything depends on the circumstances in which the next PNC will meet. If the Israelis continue to pursue a hard line and matters remained static, and if the proposed solutions continue to be the same solutions put forward now, then Abu 'Ammar will certainly be able to put his act together. The majority of the Fatah movement central committee members and the majority of the other

factions will stand with him. But if the U.S. initiative makes positive progress and the Palestinians are given something that would encourage them to come forward and to show response, then matters will take a different direction and the views of Abu al-Hasan and his supporters will prevail.

Some people say that Israel might launch a series of assassinations against some Palestinian leaders, including 'Arafat, Abu al-Lutf, and even Khalid al-Hasan in order to create a critical situation and hasten the collapse of the Palestinian structure. Other people say that in case the PNC is convened, the wagering will not be on Abu al-Said but rather on Khalid al-Fahum, who resides in Damascus, is head of the Salvation Front, and still considers himself the legitimate PNC chairman.

In any case, it remains to be said that the question involves equations and balances of power inside and outside the Palestinian arena. Any upset in these balances of power in whatever direction, will certainly have an impact on the course of events. But despite all that, all signs indicate that the Palestinian situation is experiencing what is described as a bottleneck and that the sword of rift might strike at any moment.

Hanan 'Ashrawi Examines Own Role in Peace Talks

91AE0580A Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew (Weekend Supplement) 16 Aug 91 pp 7-8

[Interview by Smadar Peri with Hanan 'Ashrawi; place and date not given; "I Am the Council for the Defense of Peace"]

[Text] Here, in Hanan 'Ashrawi's study—a sofa, a loveseat, and an armchair—a seven hour marathon between Faysal al-Husayni and 'Ashrawi and the "Baker boys" took place a week ago. "They said what they had to say, and we informed them that nobody will interfere in the appointment of the members of the Palestinian delegation to the international conference. The Palestinians, only the Palestinians, will decide," says 'Ashrawi. This week she is sitting here with me, after she agreed to a rare interview with an Israeli newspaper. "And what is easier," I ask her, "to conduct negotiations with the Israelis, or to clash with Baker's Jews, Aaron Miller and Dan Kretcher?" 'Ashrawi smiles: "Truthfully, I still have not had time to think about that."

From the window of the home of "the first lady of the intifadah," as she is called in the American media, one sees the military government building. For eighteen years she has seen the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers, and vice versa. Only a narrow road separates them. "We try to maintain an independent lifestyle. Occasionally, the soldiers enter, seeking documents, checking who was here. If they see journalists, they try to persuade them to get out. Once, during a curfew, an American television crew entered and informed [us]: we are hungry. We immediately loaded plates on the table and invited them to eat. They sat, apologizing for falling

upon us. They said that there were no restaurants open, because of the curfew. While they were eating and talking, soldiers burst in and shouted at them to get out of my home. I did not concede. I filed a complaint with the administration. I informed them that this is my home, and I am permitted to host and feed whomever I wish. The administration reacted with three words: it is illegal."

In two months, on October 8, will fall Hanan 'Ashrawi's 44th birthday. This is also the date that was agreed upon by the parties for the commencement of the international conference. Only the date was agreed upon. Differences of opinion exist even regarding the location of the conference. Wherever it is convened, Hanan 'Ashrawi—if one looks at the list of Israeli noes—will not be there. "Ramallah masqat ra'si wal-Quds huwiyati"—in other words, "Ramallah is the place of my birth, but Jerusalem is my identity"—a key sentence which the fluent Palestinian spokeswoman repeated countless times. Today, the Jerusalem stamp on her personal documents is an obstacle in 'Ashrawi's path to the meeting table: "Mr. Shamir did say 'yes' to the Americans, but from our perspective, this 'yes' is almost a resounding 'no'."

Her father is a doctor, a pacifist-feminist. 'Ashrawi continues: "He did not have a choice. He had four creative, independent daughters, each in her own field." He bought real estate in east Jerusalem, and took Jerusalem identity cards for himself and his family, to secure the property. And so, because of a certain address in east Jerusalem, which Dr. 'Ashrawi wishes to hide from the Israeli press. "We will publish where the house is, and tomorrow Cahana's people and other extremists will come there, and who knows what will happen," says 'Ashrawi. She is disqualified from belonging to the Palestinian delegation for negotiations with Israel.

'Ashrawi, a Christian Arab who belongs to the central sector of the PLO, became known to the world public as a television star on the "Nightline" program, which was broadcast three years ago. This was a special seven hour program on the intifadah that hosted many speakers, Israelis and Palestinians. 'Ashrawi stood out in it for two reasons: a. she was the only one who smoked incessantly in the studio; and, b. she demonstrated outstanding powers of persuasion, based upon impeccably fluent and styled English.

And it is not surprising. 'Ashrawi, who served as the head of the faculty of arts at Bir Zeit University (which closed in December 1988), did her doctorate in English literature at Virginia University. After the appearance on "Nightline," "that woman with the cigarette" was flooded with invitations to lecture throughout the world. 'Ashrawi and Faysal al-Husayni are considered the most sought after Palestinian duo. These appearances established 'Ashrawi's status in the leadership of the intifadah: "I cannot delineate what my roles were in the intifadah, for there are those who to this day are looking for an excuse to place me under arrest."

An Israeli individual who follows her, as well as all of the other members of the leadership of the intifadah, told me this week: with all due respect to her excellent powers of expression, Dr. 'Ashrawi is not an important person. She does not make decisions independently. She is not a street leader, and she has no troops. It is no coincidence that she has not been arrested until now. Apparently, she will have to exit the political picture together with Faysal al-Husayni when the real issues begin to be dealt with." In contrast with Husayni, 'Ashrawi does not reap applause on the Palestinian street. As a woman, a Christian, and an academic, she created for herself an image of an "outsider".

To date, she has been arrested only once, in 1973, when she was permitted to return from Lebanon, where she was "stuck" in the Six-Day War because of her studies at the American University of Beirut. When she arrived at her parent's home in Ramallah, within the framework of the Family Unification Law, she was taken for interrogation in the Israeli Administration building. "They showed me a list of convictions from here to tomorrow, as if I were really a terrorist. They told me that they know that I was a member of the Palestinian student organization. I confessed the fact. Finally, after hours of interrogation about my political orientation, they released me on bail of 500 Israeli pounds. That was a fortune then."

And ever since, with the Jerusalem identity card and the Palestinian laissez passez, she passes through airports throughout the world and everywhere, not just here, security personnel await her. "We call the examination room at Ben-Gurion airport the VIP room. Finally, I tell the Israeli security personnel", the Palestinians receive special treatment. They examine us carefully, open suitcases, inquire where I am going, who paid for the ticket, and mainly, it interests them when I am returning, so that they can make me another reception in the VIP room." But not only in Israel. She was deported from the Cairo airport twice in a row, two years ago. "They do not like us. In the Arab countries, too, we are seen as a security obstacle."

Just last weekend, when 'Ashrawi landed at Ben Gurion airport with Faysal al-Husayni, they abandoned the physical examinations and did not present questions. Strange. The urgent departure of the two for "consultations" in Europe, led to a strong rumor about a short trip to PLO headquarters in Tunis. 'Ashrawi denies it: "We did not go. We were only in London and Paris. Coincidentally, 'Afif Safiyya, the PLO ambassador to Britain, and Dr. Nebil Sha'at, 'Arafat's political advisor, were also there. I imagine that the rumors about our short trip to Tunis came in the wake of the differences of opinion about the Palestinian representation. You thought that we would have to consult with the high echelons, but these were rumors that came from you."

What do our sources say about the rumors whereby the two "ran" to Tunis? "There are no secrets, and whoever needs to know, knows. If she says that she was in Tunis,

she will immediately put into jail. There are no sentiments and no breaks, and both sides well know the rules of the game."

'Ashrawi reacts: "True, there are no secrets. But the Palestinians in the territories have an outstanding advantage over the Israelis. We know much more about you, you have no secrets from us. And what is the wonder? With all of the Palestinian waiters in the Israeli restaurants, and the dishwashers, constructions workers, and the street sweepers, and everyone who agrees to do for you the dirtiest and the most degrading jobs. For we know how you like your coffee, what they teach in the schools, how the children speak among themselves at recess, and even how the Israeli husband talks to his wife."

Fifteen years ago, she married Emil 'Ashrawi, a Christian Arab, a photographer in the service of the United Nations, three years younger than her. He is a husband who is supportive and proud of his wife, and a declared feminist. Emil: "I am not a politician. I am actually a pacifist. But I believe that my wife is doing an outstanding job. She is one of few, perhaps the only one, who is capable of the great responsibility today. She is straight and direct, works hard, devotes her entire self. Sometimes we discuss what she is doing, but there are times when she prefers to keep certain matters to herself, and I do not insist upon prying. The main support from me is the daily assistance. I try to make it easier for her, so that she will not be bothered with domestic matters. I take care of the girls when she is abroad. She is efficient and excellent in her field, and I create the most comfortable atmosphere for her."

During our interview, the husband helps his wife, who is so fluent, to complete sentences, to mention important political matters. Unlike her, he also understands Hebrew. 'Ashrawi learned only a few words in the language that she defines as "the language of occupation". "I have a mental block on this matter", she says. "Usually, I refrain from being interviewed by Israeli newspapers. An Israeli journalist comes and asks whether I will devote at least two hours to him. The Israelis want to go into the smallest details."

Amal (Tikvah [in Hebrew, Hope in English]), 14, and Zaynah (Nava [in Hebrew, Beautiful in English]), 10, Hanan and Emil 'Ashrawi's daughters, took a little from Mom and a little from Dad. Zaynah: "If the intifadah continues, I want to be like my mother. To travel in the world, to appear on television, and to be important and famous. My father teaches me a few words in Hebrew, and I am proud of my mother, but I wish that she would be home much more. She travels often and explains that it is good that we miss her. I would not like my mother to be a minister in the Palestinian government, so she could have free time for us. I would also like her to stop smoking. I will not smoke when I grow up. And I tell her, but it does not help. My mother does not like it when [people] tell her. She is independent, and she always does what she wants to."

The Palestinian woman, determines 'Ashrawi, is the real symbol of the intifadah: "Our women have attained substantial achievements. Palestinian women have always been much more liberal than women in the Arab world. They traveled more, opened up to the great world. Our society is more liberal."

"With the Israeli occupation, the need to act, to achieve, to contribute, was rendered urgent. All at once, because of the character of the intifadah and the situation created in its aftermath, the Palestinian woman is called upon to accept responsibility, to demonstrate authority, to make decisions. And today we have women directors in economic projects. The women have full control over the village cooperatives. Women come and go. They are not shut up at home. But the situation, in general, is still far from satisfactory. There is still much to do on the issue of the full emancipation of the Palestinian woman."

Are there grounds for comparison, I wonder, between the emancipatory trends of the Palestinian women and the parallel struggle for the liberation of the territories? 'Ashrawi likes the question: "The comparison is correct, for we are referring to oppression. The oppression of Palestinian women by their husbands and the oppression of the residents by the occupying power. There is no such thing as a compassionate and graceful occupying power, and from my perspective, there is no difference between sexual, economic, military, or cultural oppression. And there is no room for action by stages, in the style of: first we become liberated from the burden of the men, and then we become available to liberate ourselves from the Israeli occupier. We must act at the same time."

[Peri] Let us suppose that the Palestinian state has already been established. What do you estimate will be the nature of relations with the State of Israel?

['Ashrawi] "Everything depends upon the nature of the accord that will be attained. If we arrive at an accord that will do away with the asymmetry between us, it will be possible to arrive at normal relations."

[Peri] Normalization like with Egypt?

['Ashrawi] "No. The normalization with Egypt is not a natural matter; it was not achieved within the [framework of] Arab consensus. People in Egypt are hesitant and deterred from real cooperation with Israel, because of ties, business, and accounts with the Arab world. But if a fair and just accord is achieved between us, the time for cooperation shall arrive, mainly economic, between the State of Palestine and the State of Israel. Although, I must note that Israel will not take first place in our priorities in the realm of foreign relations with our neighbors."

[Peri] Do you also subscribe to the opinion that it is necessary to go through an interim stage, in the form of self-rule in the territories, on the way to the establishment of the Palestinian state?

['Ashrawi] "Definitely. But on the condition that a limited period for the interim stage is set, as well as an unequivocal date for its termination. I am willing to accept the appraisal that we are still not ready to jump from occupation to a state. We need to become adjusted to living in conditions of full freedom. While I wish that the occupiers would get out of here overnight, I think that we, too, need an interim stage, a stage of adjustment. Even more so, I imagine that the Israelis will not get out of here all at once."

[Peri] And what about bitterness? It is natural to assume that residues and bitterness were created on your part.

['Ashrawi] "The Palestinians, by nature, are not revengeful. Each time I am amazed from anew how quick they are to forgive. They forget and forgive the Israelis and others. The circumstances have created such a mentality with us."

[Peri] To date, I have not succeeded in discovering the Palestinian tendency toward forgiveness, but rather the opposite. And even in your case, the Islamic Jihad is already threatening your life because of "forgiveness" on your part toward American Secretary of State Baker.

['Ashrawi] "I will tell you something: To date, I have not seen the proclamation by the Islamic Jihad. And the fact is that I first heard about the very existence of this proclamation threatening my life and the life of Faysal al-Husayni on the news of the Voice of Israel. And I wonder if this isn't just an invention of the GSS [General Security Services] or other, non-Palestinian extremists."

[Peri] But still, are you doing anything to protect your life?

['Ashrawi] "It is better that I not go into detail. I will only say that our young people, the "shabibah", hurried to offer me protection, and I very much appreciate their offer. In the philosophical realm, I prefer to die, if that is what is slated for me, for the sake of peace, because I definitely see myself committed to peace. In the practical realm, for years already, I have kept in my purse an "arrest kit": sweets, cigarettes, and a fascinating book. If I am arrested, I will be able to manage."

[Peri] You invest great effort, run all over the world for the Palestinian cause and, ultimately, you will not even be at the conference table because of your Jerusalem identity card.

['Ashrawi] "Believe me, more than anything else I would like to return to teaching at the university and writing. But unfortunately, circumstances were created in which I am needed. With regard to my participation in the delegation, or any other role, there is a chance, but the matter does not depend on me."

[Peri] You are known as 'Arafat's darling. I am told that he greatly appreciates and respects you.

['Ashrawi] "They really said that? I do not know what to say. But it appears to me that you are right. I met him for

the first time in 1968 and had the impression that he was a great champion of women. He appreciates active women."

[Peri] And perhaps he gave you authority to conduct negotiations with the Americans particularly because of your moderate positions, because he is in need of fluent spokespersons such as yourself?

[Ashrawi] "I do not define myself as moderate. The term moderate is not neutral. You and the Americans use the term "moderate" for those willing to do things your way. I do not. I would say that I belong to the camp of the Palestinian majority who speaks with reason. I am the council for the defense of peace. [I am] committed to peace. Human life is very precious to me."

[Peri] With a hand on your heart, what do you think will arrive first: the wrinkles on your face or the Palestinian state?

[Ashrawi] "The wrinkles on my face, one must admit, have already arrived. There are no breaks for those who have passed the age of forty. I believe that the Palestinian state will arrive soon, and more wrinkles will be added, and you and I shall grow old together, as they say, with honor and charm."

[Comment by Ya'el Dayan, daughter of Moshe Dayan and Israeli author and activist who frequently lectures on peace related issues in Israel and abroad]

Yael Dayan: It Is All Talk

"I know Hanan from our joint activity in "Reshet", an organization of Israeli and Palestinian women. She is very sophisticated, for better and for worse. She is the intellectual dimension in the group of Palestinian women. Very dominant. Appearing with her at international conferences is difficult for me. She is glad to get into arguments and works on accumulating points. There were cases in which she spoke abroad in a style different than her style in Israel. And there were cases in which I was forced to make my positions more extreme to the right than they are, in order to contradict her employment of feelings, or a blow below the belt. Her fluent tongue enables her to exploit all stages and target audiences. Here, she is perceived as moderate, despite the fact that she is no more moderate than the others. The reason is her fluency. She knows how to appeal to women, men, Americans, and Israelis. After tens of joint appearances, I would not define her as my friend. While there is no suspicion between us, I am careful not to anger her, and she relates to me as right of the peace camp.

Salim al-Za'nun on PNC, Dispute With Syria

91AE0582B London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
9 Aug 91 pp 28-29

[Interview with Salim al-Za'nun, deputy chairman of the Palestine National Council in Tunis; 'At Next Session We Will Announce Death of Contacts With Israelis;' date not given]

[Text] The following interview AL-HAWADITH had with Deputy Palestine National Council [PNC] Chairman Salim al-Za'nun (Abu al-Adib), was an attempt to explore the PLO's current views.

Abu al-Adib was outspoken in the interview. Therefore, when he says that the coming PNC meeting will announce the death of the Palestinian-Israeli contacts, it means that the PLO has given up on the usefulness of the moderate policies it has been pursuing during the past 10 years, and that it is about to revert to a hardline stance in its dealings with the other parties concerned with the Middle East problem.

But whether the PLO succeeds in reverting to a hardline policy in view of the Arab and international changes is another matter which one cannot now predict.

The following dialogue with Abu al-Adib ensued:

[AL-HAWADITH] What are the possibilities of convening a regional conference in order to solve the Middle East problem and when will such conference take place?

[Al-Za'nun] I do not think that such a conference will be held in the near future because Israel is still maintaining a state of a no war, no peace in the area, and all the Arabs have emerged exhausted from the Gulf war, whose outcome strengthened Israel's position politically, militarily, and economically. Some people believe that the United States is serious in its peace efforts, but there is a difference between one who works heartily for a certain cause and one who works halfheartedly. The question is: If [Secretary of State] Baker reaches a dead end blocked by a rock called Shamir, will he call on the [UN] Security Council to meet in order to deal with Shamir's defiance, and then ask the Council to condemn this defiance that has lasted 24 years, preparatory to setting a deadline for Israel similar to that which was set for Iraq? Would he then let the Council deal with the situation in accordance with the UN Charter which gives it the right to send an international force that would besiege the Israeli aggressors and force them militarily to withdraw from the land they occupied in 1948 in excess of what the partitioning resolution provided for, and that which they occupied in 1967?

The answer to this question came from President Bush and James Baker; it was a mere threat to expose the party that is blocking the peace process and the convening of an international conference.

The international conference [idea] has existed since 1974. It is co-chaired by the United States and the Soviet Union, but its only meeting, and the efforts to reconvene it were obstructed by Israel and by U.S. bias, which allowed this Israeli rebellion against the international conference.

In view of Israel's opposition to convening the conference in accordance with Security Council Resolution 338, the United States lowered the ceiling of the conference to become a regional conference. This means

excluding the permanent Security Council member states. This was followed by Israeli bargaining over who will participate in the conference from outside the area, such as Europe, the Gulf countries, and the United Nations. Thus the United States shifted Israel from a weak position facing the Soviet Union, China, and France to a position of strength that argues and dictates conditions regarding whose participation in the conference is acceptable and unacceptable, the level of participation, and whether the participant is a principal or a deaf and dumb observer, as it is proposed for the United Nations.

Israel has rejected the right to call it a regional conference and, giving in, the United States proposed something even less; recently they called it the "peace conference" so that, by so naming it, it will be devoid of international obligations, and so that Israel will dominate or take part in determining the limits of the conference, its powers, and so on.

As to when will this conference be held, President Husni Mubarak said that it will convene in two month's time, but on 26 July he said that the possibilities of convening it are equal to those of not convening it.

Israel has forced the region to waste time. If the conference is held in any form, a one-time session will be held within a year. After that the U.S. Administration will be preoccupied with the presidential elections battle and Israel will give the excuse of being busy with the Israeli elections. After the dust settles, only one meeting will be held, or even no meeting at all.

[AL-HAWADITH] Are you so pessimistic about the peace efforts that are preoccupying the world?

[Al-Za'nun] I am not pessimistic, but good beginnings lead to good results and vice versa. Some of us erred when we believed what Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh said about the United States being serious in its efforts to achieve peace on the basis of President Bush's declaration before Congress, and what he told Saudi Arabia and the eight Arab [Damascus Declaration] countries, that the settlement will be based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. The evidence to the fact that we were wrong is that what matters is not what Nixon said or one day promised to King Husayn, or what Carter once said, or what Reagan and Schultz announced. The United States is a state of institutions and the U.S. State Department moves according to plans drawn by its experts. We must remember that the working paper which the U.S. State Department laid down before the Gulf war has set autonomy and the Camp David agreements as its ceiling. One of its most important elements was to find a substitute leadership after getting rid of the present leadership. The substitute leadership would come from Palestinians residing in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Baker left Dennis Ross behind [in Israel]; he is a Jew and a senior State Department official heading a U.S. delegation to work on

forming the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation to the peace conference and excluding a representative from Jerusalem.

Therefore, it is wrong to believe Baker when he says that his activities and trips are for the purpose of implementing Resolutions 242 and 338. If we were able to look at the file he is carrying, we would see that the plan is signed by Dennis Ross, who helped draft it with the team he set up in the State Department.

[AL-HAWADITH] But many people are optimistic about the peace efforts. Even hardline countries like Syria have accepted the U.S. initiative.

[Al-Za'nun] I have told you that everybody is wasting time and is trying to master the art of throwing the ball to the other side's court.

[AL-HAWADITH] But it appears that the difference is centering on how to form the Palestinian delegation.

[Al-Za'nun] It is wrong to discuss the dispute over small details before understanding is reached on the root of the problem. The root of the problem is the question of whether Israel is prepared to withdraw from Jerusalem on the grounds that it is included in Resolution 242. If the answer is in the affirmative, then we will move to discussing the next question: Who will be in the delegation? Then there will be no need for disagreement, because if we were going to eat grapes, which is Jerusalem, then it doesn't matter if the warden is from Jerusalem, Tulkarm, or Haifa. Israel is proclaiming through Shamir that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Israel, that it is indivisible, and that he does not believe in giving up land.

[AL-HAWADITH] Shamir's statement could be tactical, and a negotiator usually demands the maximum.

[Al-Za'nun] If we were to rely on the United States and its promises, we might as well recognize that the U.S. alliance with Israel is strategic, while the U.S. alliance with the eight Arab [Damascus Declaration] states is temporary and has expired with the liberation of Kuwait. When a strategic policy is contradictory with a tactical policy, then strategy takes precedence. Therefore, we should not simplify things to this extent.

[AL-HAWADITH] What about the Syrian role?

[Al-Za'nun] Some people say that the cause of [PLO's] dispute with Syria is due to two things: relations with Egypt and the [PLO] contacts with the Jewish forces.

Syria's relations with Egypt have now become much stronger than our relations with it. Also, contacts with Jewish forces have died even without the need to fire a final shot on them. I believe that at its upcoming meeting, our PNC will end the controversy over this question by issuing a certificate confirming its death. It is very important that, since Syrian and Palestinian policies have become completely identical, bilateral

coordination should be carried out away from all negative issues of the past in order to face the coming stage, which is extremely critical and difficult.

If from now on we should unify the Syrian, Palestinian, Jordanian, and Lebanese stands in order to positively deal with the U.S. initiative. Then such a step would be very useful in acting according to a single plan and in joining forces to deal with the stage that might follow the initiative's deadlock because of Israel's intransigence.

[AL-HAWADITH] What is the real European stand? Is it true that the Europeans asked Yasir 'Arafat to stop the intifadah?

[Abu al-Za'nun] We should not be unfair to the European stand. The Dutch delegate may have given such advice and suggested that the PLO should remain in the shadows until the peace efforts are launched, and that the PLO should accept some kind of formula regarding the joint delegation, but the Palestinian leadership, through brother Abu 'Ammar, gave a clear and decisive answer. It affirmed the Palestinian constants and the independence of the Palestinian decision. It underlines the strong presence of the steadfast Palestinian people whom events could not subdue, although they wounded it slightly. 'Arafat also rejected any bargaining over postponing the discussion of reclaiming Jerusalem. He also rejected normalization of Arab-Israeli relations and all attempts to bypass the Palestinian people and impose autonomy.

[AL-HAWADITH] What is the attitude of the Arab countries toward the U.S. peace initiative?

[Al-Za'nun] I disagree with your calling this a peace initiative. It is a U.S. gesture toward certain Arab countries. Who believes that Bush is serious or capable of adopting Resolutions 242 and 338? Jordan announced that there are similar guarantees that withdrawal from the occupied territories will be complete. Egypt has been enthusiastic about this since its 10-point plan and Baker's five-point proposals were announced. It also blames us for hindering the peace process. But in the face of Israeli intransigence and insistence on excluding a representative from Jerusalem, it could do no better than issuing a joint statement with Jordan condemning the Israeli stand.

[AL-HAWADITH] What is the Palestinian stand?

[Salim al-Za'nun] "We are on our own," as Abu 'Ammar would say. All that we hear from the United States, the Soviet Union, and Europe is just theories, principles, and aspirations. The reality of the situation is:

- First, insistence on excluding the Palestinian people and considering the issue a border problem with four Arab countries.
- Second, insistence on clinging to all of Palestine, including Jerusalem. &Third, Soviet and European advice either recommending acceptance of forming a delegation tailored to Israeli's needs, stopping the intifadah temporarily, or postponing the question of Jerusalem. (If Shamir accepts convening a peace conference session, he will not allow it to hold another session).

This is a long and winding scenario whose ultimate aim is to trap the Palestinian side so that it will make further concessions, and thus strip the Palestinian body of its remaining physical existence.

[AL-HAWADITH] What is the solution, in your view?

[Al-Za'nun] The solution is to revert to the constants and to adhere to them, may the world excuse us for so doing after we have offered so much. As long as Shamir's stand is not to give up land nor Jerusalem, even if history is going to say about him that he has thwarted peace efforts, let our Arab nation's logical and historical answer say: We have played hosts in our Arab homeland to Jews who were thrown out of Europe as minorities. They gathered in Palestine and conquered us. So let us declare in our PNC that we want to liberate Palestine from the river to the sea. They [the Jews] lived in it in peace under the protection of the magnanimous Islam as non-Muslim people of the book. Just as the sun has set over the British Empire, one day it will set over the American Empire. Our duty is to keep hope alive in the spirit of our coming generations and to hand down the banner clean, from generation to generation.

[AL-HAWADITH] The PNC preparatory committee has been moving slowly. Will the PNC be convened?

[Al-Za'nun] The committee which met a week ago was a specialized technical committee set up by the preparatory committee, which must meet with all its members attending. These are members of the PNC bureau, members of the executive committee, and a number of independents (which usually include general secretaries of factions). Therefore, what some people said about this committee and its legitimacy is unfounded. This committee has completed its task by submitting its recommendations on the formation of the PNC and its leadership. The Palestinian leadership has studied these recommendations and called the preparatory committee for a meeting in order to begin determining the new PNC members.

[AL-HAWADITH] Will the executive committee remain in place despite changes in the present situation and in circumstances?

[Al-Za'nun] Such discussion is uncalled for, because the 20th PNC session will be the first ordinary session of the new PNC, by virtue of which a new executive committee will be elected.

[AL-HAWADITH] What if the present members remain in office?

[Salim al-Za'nun] The PNC has the right to elect members of the new executive committee and I do not think it is going to give up this right.

[AL-HAWADITH] People in Amman recall how skillfully you managed the 17th PNC, which was held in Amman in 1984. Are you a candidate for the PNC chairmanship?

[Salim al-Ze'nun] Customarily, the PNC chairman is an independent. Incidentally, the independents are more than 50 percent of the PNC members.

Hamas Renews Terms for Joining PNC

91AE0534A Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
3 Jul 91 p 2

[Article by Lamis K. Andoni: "Hamas Renews Terms for Joining PNC (Palestine National Council); PLO Says It Is Open Only To 'Suggestions'"]

[Text] Amman—The Islamic Fundamentalist movement, Hamas, has called on the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to drop its 1988 peace strategy and to accept direct elections of members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) as two conditions to be met before Hamas would join the organisation, according to Hamas' officials in Amman.

"These are our two major preconditions to join the PNC," said Ibrahim Ghushi, a senior Hamas official, in an interview with the JORDAN TIMES.

In an initial reaction to the call, a senior PLO official said that the organisation would accept the principle of direct elections of PNC members in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip if Israel authorised such a step.

"If any party can convince Israel to hold such elections it is more than welcome," PLO Executive Committee member Muhammad Milhim said.

But he indicated that even though the PLO welcomed Hamas' participation it will not accept preconditions that might undermine the organisation.

"The floor is open for all Palestinian groups to put forward ideas that they believe can serve the Palestinian national interests," he said. "But we do not accept preconditions that aim at undermining PLO institutions."

Mr. Milhim said that Hamas would be able to make its suggestions and proposals at the meetings of a preparatory committee of the PNC which will be held in the near future.

PLO officials said that all Palestinian groups were invited to take part in the preparatory committee meetings.

Mr. Ghushi confirmed that PNC Speaker Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid Sayih had sent an invitation to Hamas to attend a meeting of the council's preparatory committee. "We are still considering the invitation but we remain committed to our conditions," he said.

Hamas was established in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip shortly after the eruption of the Palestinian uprising (Intifada) four years ago.

From the very beginning it has rallied support on the basis of rejection of talks with Israel and called for the liberation of all Palestine, including Israel proper. It has rejected the 1988 PLO peace strategy, which calls for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, and has urged the organisation to drop the plan.

Although it is difficult to accurately assess the strength of Hamas, it has emerged as a very influential movement, especially in the Gaza Strip.

Two weeks ago Hamas achieved a landslide victory in elections of the Arab Chamber of Commerce in the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. It competed with representatives of all other PLO groups.

Some Palestinian analysts believe that divisions within the PLO groups had helped Hamas to increase its influence in the Palestinian institutions. But Hamas officials counter that the result of the elections reflected Hamas' strength on the ground.

They argue that Hamas' influence and consequently its political line should be translated in the PLO decision-making institutions if the movement is to join the organisation.

Last year Hamas demanded 40 percent of the 380-member PNC seats as a precondition to take part in the council.

This week Mr. Ghushi, who is based in Amman, said that the movement did not accept the present PNC structure and demanded free and direct elections to allow "a fair and proportionate representation of Palestinians everywhere."

"We cannot accept the present structure of the PNC; it will have to change," he said, adding that there should be quotas to determine the number of seats for Palestinians in each country and the occupied territories that correspond to their numbers.

Hamas, which had conveyed its conditions to the PLO, proposes that such elections should be supervised by the United Nations.

Even though the idea of conducting elections of PNC members in the occupied territories has been raised and discussed within the ranks of the PLO in the last few months, some officials fear that it will give way to Israel's proposal to elect an alternative Palestinian leadership. Furthermore, such elections in other countries could be proved to be an unrealistic proposal.

Mr. Milhim said that the PLO was not ready to endorse any proposal that will violate the laws and regulations of Arab countries where Palestinians live.

"Each Arab country has its own laws and regulations. We are not ready to take any step that might violate these laws or encroach upon the sovereignty of these Arab countries," Mr. Milhim asserted.

Many PLO officials believe that Hamas has not dropped its objective of trying to undermine the organisation or take over the Palestinian movement.

Hamas officials admit, that they believe that direct elections will ensure the Islamic movement's domination of the PLO.

"If these elections are held we expect to get 40 to 50 percent of the PNC seats," Mr. Ghushi contended.

The Islamic official reiterated his movement's rejection of any peace talks with Israel and renewed its demands that the PLO drop its peace plan.

"We believe that the current peace proposals aim at guaranteeing the interests and the security of the Jewish entity and the normalisation of relations between the Jewish state and the Arab countries without any territorial concessions," he argued.

Mr Milhim said that Hamas was welcome to raise its concerns and try to make amendments provided that the aim was not to create an alternative PLO.

"Amendments and adjustments are possible but attempts to form another PLO are just unacceptable," he stressed.

West Bank Notables on Future of the Intifadah

91AE0458A *London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic*
21 Jun 91 p 3

[Article: "AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Talks with Occupied Territory Leaders. Creation of Internal Provisional Palestinian Government a Requirement"]

[Text] Following the dialogue held in the occupied territories in April and May of this year about the importance of developing the PLO and Palestinian representation and the means to achieve that, a dialogue has been underway this month concerning the matter of assessing the intifadah with a view to ridding it of certain shortcomings that have been plaguing it for the last three and a half years. The assessment process is being carried out under difficult economic and social conditions and amid Israeli maneuvering aimed at distorting the picture.

In an effort to acquaint itself with the progress achieved so far by this assessment process, the Media Services Center directed five questions to eight West Bank and Gaza Strip leaders aimed at pinpointing the reasons for such an assessment and exploring potential Israeli impact and the chances of this matter turning into internal conflicts. The answers were not too much different from each other, thus reflecting a clear Palestinian vision.

Following are the questions and answers that have been edited to avoid repetition as much as possible while highlighting new or distinct issues raised by the respondents.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] There has been much talk about the importance of assessing the intifadah. What do you think about that and what are the reasons for such an undertaking?

Sari Nusaybah, professor of philosophy at Bi'r Zayt University, talked about the importance of distinguishing between assessment and press coverage, especially in the Israeli media. He said: "Assessment through a profound debate has been going on for some time now and this is a necessary and natural process because it is impossible for the intifadah to persevere, to grow, and to achieve its objectives without the participation of intellectuals and without considering hostile Israeli deception. Nevertheless, we are fully confident that the intifadah, as a form of Palestinian resistance, will persevere and achieve its goals of freedom and independence."

Bassam al-Shaq'ah, mayor of the city of Nabulus who was removed by the Israeli authorities, emphasized that assessment "is a historical duty of every people and leadership in critical stages. The intifadah, as a historic event, is in need of reinterpretation at every stage, especially in the wake of Arab and international changes and their repercussions on the arena, on the intifadah, and on the situation of the PLO as the framework for its people's unity."

Palestinian Democracy Distorted

Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Nabulus University professor, said: "I can assure you that assessment is a process that has accompanied the intifadah right from the outset" and is a natural thing to do. The new thing, in his view, is that the Israeli press "has discovered that there is such a thing as Palestinian democracy" and is trying to distort it.

Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, president of the Red Crescent Society in Gaza, said: "The truth of the matter is that right after the gulf war there was great hope that the Palestinian issue would be treated as an occupation and an aggression with the same criteria used to deal with the Kuwait issue. But, there is a sense now that this issue will not get the same attention. Therefore, the Palestinians are facing the question of what to do and what road to follow. Naturally, there has to be an assessment process to push it forward."

Positivism and Negativisms

Nazim 'Uwaydah, Shaykh Yasin's attorney in Gaza, believes that every revolution has its positive aspects, and sometimes the negative aspects triumph, so one has to know "how to deal with such negativisms and prevent exploitation."

'Abd-al-Mun'im 'Adwan, who recently lived through assessment debates at the Ansar detention camp in the

Negev, believes that every assessment exercise is aimed at supporting and developing the intifadah. With regard to the reasons, he believes that the common awareness of the intifadah's woes at this stage is the main reason for the assessment, and this was supposed to have occurred early on.

Fathi al-Hajj, a Red Crescent doctor in Khan Yunus, believes that assessment "is a vital and necessary requirement to face any mass frustrations vis-a-vis the disintegration stemming from the tattered situation of our brothers on the outside. To ascertain where we stand, what we want or do not want, and how to change things, we must have an assessment now that the intifadah is almost four years old."

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What aspects do you believe will be assessed and for what purpose?

Sari Nusaybah: "Assessment will go through the intifadah's policy or strategic planning, tactical programs, and negative actions and manifestations associated with the intifadah as a popular social revolution that is not infallible. It is necessary, however, to see the picture as a whole." Nusaybah pointed out that "society continues to maintain special relations, and negative manifestations such as robberies and murders are not nearly as bad as in the so-called civilized countries. Nevertheless, we are doing our best to keep these manifestations under control. The overall picture of Palestinian society is positive."

As for Bassam al-Shak'ah, he believes that "negative Arab relations, which led to the gulf crisis, still exist and impact on the Palestinian question. It is necessary for the Palestinians to provide the proper Arab and national circumstances to fulfill the mission's objective so that it may deal with international situations." It appears that al-Shak'ah believes that the assessment of the intifadah ought to be part of a more comprehensive Arab process.

'Abd-al-Latif Ghayth, journalist and teacher in occupied Jerusalem, said: "If we want our assessment to be productive, it must deal fundamentally with the intifadah's mainstays, the political, economic, organizational, and struggle ones in particular, and must not be limited to certain peripheral phenomena or perils. This ought to teach us some lessons we can use to escalate the intifadah."

Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi believes that Israel's rejection of the peace initiative necessitates carrying on with the intifadah, and this calls for an assessment. Furthermore, the Palestinian people are using the intifadah to express their rejection of occupation and "their adherence to the Palestinian peace initiative." He expects Israel and the United States to comply with the declared principles of a just peace. In other words, the relationship between the intifadah and the assessment process to guarantee continuity and between it and a just peace as an objective is dialectical.

Attorney Nazim 'Uwaydah would like the assessment process to include every step or program that has become unproductive in daily conduct or in general practice, citing as examples school closings during the strikes, the widespread presence of masked individuals in school auditoriums, and factional clashes. Moreover, a general review of the intifadah's programs ought to be undertaken with a view to classifying them by experiences gained so far.

'Abd-al-Salam 'Adwan said: "I would like the assessment to include goals and slogans that have been raised theoretically but not fulfilled, to pinpoint the reasons for shortcomings and ways to overcome them, and to identify accomplishments and ways to preserve and make good use of them."

Fathi al-Hajj talked about the importance of building, through the assessment process, the basic structures, such as the economic, educational, and political ones that must all be pondered and carefully considered in order to assure the continuation of the intifadah as a reform revolution whose transformation has been devised to exhaust the people. He called for a stop to the masked-face phenomenon which Israel is exploiting and for an examination of murders committed in public places that touch everyone, including children. About the goals, he said that the objective is to create a better situation and keep in check despair and frustrations. He also said that new organizational means must be found to achieve national unity.

Israeli Exploitation

The third question was about the prospects of stopping the assessment process because it is being negatively exploited by the Israeli media.

Everyone emphasized the importance of distinguishing between the two matters, saying that Israeli measures would not have an impact on the course of action in the long run. Sirri Nusaybah said that the Israeli media, as well as the foreign media, are trying to give the impression that the intifadah is in the throes of death. If a democratic dialogue is not held, Israel would allege that the PLO is impeding democracy, and if a dialogue is held, it would allege that it is against the PLO. Bassam al-Shak'ah in turn said that the occupation bases its contentions on its own ethics and wishes, ferreting out alleged conflicts among national and religious tendencies, but that this would not impact on the intifadah's essence and premise. Sa'ib 'Urayqat emphasized that the Israeli media has been taking and will continue to take advantage of the situation, spreading rumors that the intifadah is on the verge of collapse, while in fact it is rising high and taking the Palestinian people up with it. Haydar al-Shafi said "I cannot imagine that this will bring the assessment process to a halt" and he does not see any reason for concern over Israeli allegations.

Nazim 'Uwaydah said that, while the assessment process is based on objective foundations aimed at serving the higher interest, Israeli attempts to exploit the situation

will continue to fail, and international sympathy with the Palestinian people will indeed intensify. 'Abd-al-Salam 'Adwan affirmed this view, stressing the fact that the people are already aware of Israel distortions, and that the important thing is to undertake a serious and candid self-examination. 'Abd-al-Latif Ghayth's position was distinguished by his call to media leaders in the occupied territories to be careful of what they write since Israel has exploited and distorted their published work to its own ends.

Reckless Action

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It appears from what has already been said that part of the assessment process deals with negative phenomena and reckless actions by some youth. How can this be stopped from leading to internal conflicts.

[Nusaybah] First, it is necessary to develop the national leadership as a universal power and a legitimate and central field authority in the occupied territories. Second, we must come up with effective means and strategy that would steer burning emotions and passions toward the real objectives. To this end, it is important to explain the new strategy to the masses and reactivate their participation in the intifadah.

[Al-Shak'ah] All the factions involved in the conflicts clearly agree that occupation must be resisted and the right to self-determination and an independent state upheld. Any conflicts would be an incentive for the leaders to rise to the level of our masses within the required assessment so that we may arrive at a single political strategy, and our leaders and organizations may, through their movements and relations, unanimously express the interests, goals, and unity of our masses.

[Urayqat] This will not lead to internal conflicts, and we are not an ideal society. Even if we did have a state, there would be thieves, murderers, and smugglers. The discussion and treatment of these matters at this point is an urgent necessity, and we, as a Palestinian people, should be proud of our ability to debate and assess, despite catastrophic economic circumstances and severe repression. Our society has no courts, no army, and no national police force. Therefore, we should not worry about a people who discuss their problems clearly and democratically in such a climate. I believe that this discussion in itself will do away with the negative phenomena.

['Abd-al-Shafi] There is no doubt that there are problems that must be averted, and sometimes excesses do occur. But, in the face of the imminent danger threatening our future, it would not be difficult or impossible to overcome all the problems that may crop up now and then.

['Uwaydah] Some recent events left a bad impression on the Gaza Strip populace, and some people got all mixed up because of these negative aspects that must be dealt with. However, there would be no place for internal conflicts if everyone pursued the national objective.

Away From Partnership

['Abd-al-Salam 'Adwan] Internal conflicts can be easily averted if the debate were to continue far away from partisanship and without heaping accusations against certain sides or granting absolution to others. But, at the same time, we must not offer a scapegoat to bear responsibility for the negativisms. In no way can we turn the masked legends of yesterday into the criminals of today. Field action requires technology, specifications, and a central authority to be held accountable.

[Al-Hajj] Conflicts can be prevented through the proper channels and through non-factional committees. Also, it is important that the factions and parties agree on a minimum course to avert conflicts.

Intifadah's Course

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] What can be done to correct the intifadah's course and what role can the PLO play in this regard?

[Nusaybah] One thing that ought to be seriously considered is the designation of an additional phase for the intifadah by announcing the formation of a provisional Palestinian government—as a melting pot for the various leaders in the occupied territories—to be added to other PLO organizations. This step would complement the declaration of independence, give the intifadah one more goal to fight for on the ground, and reorient action that is disintegrating and straying from the proper course of creating a state. This step would represent a new political bomb that would enable us to regain the initiative and unite the ranks behind a phased objective in the course of creating a Palestinian state.

[Al-Shak'ah] This is a big question that should also be directed to official and popular Arab leaders because this assessment process, besides its importance on the Palestinian level, is encased in a national, pan-Arab, and international human issue. While the Palestinians are performing this task singlehandedly, in view of the great pressure put on them by the occupation and the surrounding international reality, it is essential to have Palestinian-Arab-international interaction.

[Ghayth] Sweeping reform of Palestinian conditions, most notably expanding national unity to include everyone in accordance with a clear program, must be instituted. The PLO can play a major role in this regard and, if it neglects to do so, will pay the highest price.

['Urayqat] The key role any loyal person inside or outside the occupied territories can play is to try to restore to the intifadah its mass dimension, to firm up democracy, and to reinforce the pillars of national unity and awareness of Israeli designs. The PLO guides the people politically and seeks to relieve their sufferings economically. The Palestinian people are like an eagle with the PLO as its head, the people on the inside as its first wing, and the Palestinians on the outside as its

second wing, and this body cannot fly without total coordination between the parts.

Putting Palestinian House in Order

[Abd-al-Shafi] It is necessary to put the Palestinian house in order. I do not say to restore order because it was never put in proper order. By order, I mean practicing democracy at all Palestinian levels in such a way as to allow for the organization and mobilization of Palestinian capabilities in all fields and to use them in a pragmatic and scientific way, thus achieving unity of action among them.

[Uwaydah] In field action, warning and ostracism ought to be used in place of murder, and the face-masking phenomenon should be stopped in dealing with the populace and in pursuing and identifying thieves. About the PLO's role, it has the means to put things in order, but it must deal with honest people, must validate its sources, and must disavow anything that serves personal ends.

'Abd-al-Salam 'Adwan also talked about restoring the mass dimension to the intifadah by reforming and reactivating popular committees, by attaining self-reliance through economic development and better home economic skills, and by implanting the principles of social solidarity. He added that the PLO has many roles to play, including equitable material support and moral and media support, in addition to the important role of using the intifadah's accomplishments to better serve the cause at the Arab and international levels.

Reasons for 'Excesses' of Intifadah Youth

91AE0507A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
19 Jul 91 p 5

[Article by Lina 'Abd-al-Hadi: "Israeli Occupation Exploits Intifadah Excesses. Palestinian Leadership Unable To Contain Them"]

[Text] The new expression, "you are a mess," the people of Nabulus are using nowadays to describe the intifadah did not come from a vacuum, but is rather the product of many incidents that have been building up within the intifadah and throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Everyone is now talking about the "intifadah's disarray and excesses," especially those committed, according to some reports, by intruders.

Two months ago, the people of Nabulus were surprised to learn that the city's burglary ring that committed several burglaries included some young intifadah members. Investigations being conducted by the intifadah youth as well revealed that those young men have had a long history of political action and deep-rooted struggle, have been tried several times by Israeli military tribunals, and have served long prison terms in Israeli jails!

Therefore, they are national symbols in the city, but have nevertheless turned into thieves making their living from

burglaries and crime. They have actually committed several burglaries, the most significant of which are those committed against jewelry stores in Nabulus and the homes of the city's wealthy residents.

Who is responsible for this situation? What controls such behavior?

Can the intifadah's unified national leadership, with its various branches, put a stop to such serious excesses?

These are the questions that are still being raised, but meanwhile, another phenomenon has come to light in Nabulus that has become the talk of the town, namely the embezzlement of municipal money. Some "patriotic" employees, known for their political background, have embezzled hundreds of thousands of dinars by forging electric and water receipts.

Some have justified this behavior by claiming that such actions are committed for the sole purpose of funding the intifadah and safeguarding its continuity, and that the embezzled money is spent on the striking forces and the fugitives.

Observers comment on this by saying that this means constitutes an excuse worse than the offense itself. So, is the intifadah in need of such means, and does its continuity actually depend on them?

The intifadah has had a great qualitative impact on the Palestinian societal, economic, cultural, and political fabric, generating some real shocks that have sent tremors throughout the daily life and implanted a set of values in the hearts and minds of people. Conversely, the unified national leadership, represented by its four organizations, has not yet put forth a social cultural program based on new foundations that make allowances for the very important developments the intifadah has generated, for it is according its greatest attention to the economic and political aspects while ignoring the social aspect that is automatically linked to the two former aspects. And, because attention is being accorded only to the political aspect, several factors have contributed to the exacerbation of social and ethical problems. Some of these factors are:

First, the selection of young men and women with inadequate organizational and struggle experience to be responsible "strike forces," thus inducing them to commit certain excesses without a real appreciation for the critical stage or their responsibilities, like, for example, unwarranted interrogation of residents, sending threatening letters to some individuals prompted by personal grudges and not by any official order, or ill-conceived military parades that ultimately lead to the arrest of scores of young people without creating any negative impact on enemy forces.

Second, the multitude of movements within the same organization, thus creating confusion in people's minds as to who is patriotic and who is a traitor because sometimes a political communique is put out in Nabulus

in the middle of the night in the name of Fatah revolutionary justice, calling for a strike on a certain day while, in the meantime, the Fatah revolutionary security leadership issues a statement against such a strike, and so on.

Third, is the current conflict between the Hamas Movement and Fatah that has led to many excesses on the Palestinian scene. These conflicts and excesses are attributed to disagreements between the two sides with no one to keep an eye on them.

Fourth, the failure so far to arrive at a solution to the question of liquidating collaborators, therefore the mistakes made here and there that have resulted in the death of some innocent people, thus triggering their families' wrath against the intifadah.

Fifth, the spread of fifth column declarations calling for halting the intifadah in order to pass the Baker plan, including statements about the need to keep shops open all day and to go to Israel on vacation. In fact, during the Greater Bairam holiday, close to 2,000 cars went from the West Bank to Tel Aviv and Natanya to spend an evening at restaurants there and tour the parks, notwithstanding the decision taken at the outset of the intifadah to boycott these cities.

The unified leadership and the Palestinian organizations with their various cadres have made scattered attempts here and there aimed at staving off such serious excesses that the Israeli occupation is exploiting to the hilt, taking advantage of the bad economic situation and the business slump afflicting most of the people in the occupied territories.

Preoccupation with the economic, political and social aspects would, to be sure, generate a new kind of relations. A shift in the production pattern places the local economy in a new mode that would reflect on the existing production relations, by which new relations would be created to destroy the old backward ones, to maintain the new ones, and to invent a new mentality able to achieve victory.

The intifadah, which is now taking place in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, will inevitably leave its imprint on the whole situation, and it must change or else it will continue to be a framework devoid of true content.

The unified national leadership and the masses are not struggling only to achieve political results, but also to realize a democratic national program able to change and effectively contain the fait accompli with all its political, economic, and theoretical ramifications. This leadership may be in need of a central apparatus capable of putting the principles into effect.

Most of these observations fall under the category of slow change of existing systems and social rules and norms. Diligent efforts to draw up a clear national program are liable to bring about radical changes in any negative social rules and regulations that have cropped up within the intifadah.

Results of Public Opinion Poll in Gaza

91AE0573A Jerusalem AL-USBU' AL-JADID in Arabic
15 Jul 91 pp 12-15

[Article by Dr. Riyad al-['Ayalah]: "Opinion Poll Distributed in Gaza Strip After Gulf War; Poll Looks at Political, Economic, Social, and Educational Future of Palestinian People"]

[Text]

Initial Reading of Poll Results

- 85 percent see economic situation in Gaza deteriorating
- 81 percent see education in Gaza Strip as poor to very poor
- 88 percent see curriculum as unsuitable or in need of fundamental change
- 72 percent see existing political situation as bad
- 61 percent demand international law be applied under a single standard
- 68 percent call for a totally independent Palestinian state
- 54 percent see possibility of coexistence with Israel through the existence of two neighboring states
- 94 percent see no credibility in American solution, with its biased policies vis-a-vis Israel

Poll Includes All Social Strata in Gaza Strip; 28 Questions, With 495 Palestinians Polled

This poll attempts to learn the factors that have affected the economic environment, political thought, and views of citizens concerning political matters that touch the life of each person in the occupied territories. It also attempts to ascertain the obstacles and difficulties encountered in the everyday life of our citizens in the Gaza Strip, with the aim of overcoming the negative aspects and bolstering the positive.

This opinion poll was designed to include various areas of life—economic, social, educational, and political. It used field interviews distributed over a random sample of 495 individuals from different areas of the Gaza Strip, taking into consideration local population distribution in refugee camps, villages, and towns, and various age groups, as shown in the following table:

Table 1—Age Groups

Age Group	15-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75
Number	152	169	166	43	11	4
Percentage	30.7	34.1	33.5	8.68	2.22	0.8

Analysts will note in the following table that the poll is composed of 441 males, i.e., 89 percent. Perhaps we are at fault for that, but we must take into account that our Arab society is in general a conservative society. For the most part, women do not leave their homes to work unless it has to do with fulfilling household needs. Moreover, scientific studies and opinion polls have shown a correlation in Arab society—to a substantial degree—between the husband's ideas and those of his spouse. For this reason, we do not believe that the participation of 54 women, i.e. 11 percent, in this poll has had any significant effect on the general results.

Table 2—Sex

Sex	Male	Female
Number	441	54
Percentage	89	11

This opinion poll also includes various segments of the community with differing professions. Their distribution is as shown:

Table 3—Professions [First part of table]

Profession	Teacher	Laborer	Technician	Lecturer	Doctor	Lawyer	Accountant
Number	69	88	52	12	16	23	32
Percentage	14.4	17.7	10.5	2.4	3.2	4.6	6.46

[Table 3—Professions continued]

Profession	Engineer	Merchant	Student	Housewife	Journalist	Official	Farmer
Number	12	29	85	19	3	37	3
Percentage	2.42	5.85	17.1	7.83	0.6	7.47	0.6

The poll questionnaires were distributed throughout the Gaza Strip among refugee camps, towns, and villages.

Refugee camps totaled 36.96 percent of the sample, towns 52.3 percent, and villages 4.65 percent.

Educational levels were as shown below:

Table 4—Educational Level

Qualification	Illiterate	Elementary	Preparatory	Secondary	Diplomas	Baccalaureate	Masters	Doctorate
Number	2	18	49	154	78	154	5	13
Percentage	0.4	3.6	9.9	31.1	15.75	31.1	1	2.62

Note that the percentages of responses to questions submitted vary with regard to different subjects that are dealt with in the questionnaire.

Economic Situation

When the sample's individuals were asked for their evaluation of the economic situation and the citizens' living conditions, 85 percent expressed the view that the economy has been in a negative state for two years. The intifadah has not affected the economy directly, but the countermeasures employed by the authorities aimed at aborting the intifadah have basically weakened it. This view was stressed by 45.85 percent of the sample.

As for suggestions to improve the economy, 33.73 percent expressed their opinion that liberating the economy's link with Israel would be a step toward improving their economic conditions, while 36.56 percent stated that lifting restrictions and obstacles to development and investment would be a useful step.

Approximately 12.52 percent of respondents to the poll expressed the belief that opening job opportunities for workers inside the green line would effectively contribute to an improvement in the economy. Also, 50.1

percent emphasized that providing necessary funds by various sources for appropriate economic projects would be a good step toward improving the economy.

Social Situation

When the individuals in this sample were asked to give their views concerning social relationships among the citizenry, 41.41 percent stated that social relations were good, 21.81 percent said they were very good, and 26.46 percent expressed the view that they were excellent. As for those who see social relations as poor or very poor, their percentages were 7.87 and 0.6 percent, respectively.

With regard to social relationships within families and their influence on the cohesiveness of the social fabric, 67.47 percent believe that they are cohesive and strong, while 29.49 percent said they were moderate. Approximately 3.83 percent of the sample saw the social condition inside the family as fragmented and weak.

Some 62.02 percent of the sample polled linked the cause of cohesiveness and strength of social conditions to the mutual suffering as a result of the general situation. Those who referred to the second part of the reply to the question, which was exposure to danger, the travel ban,

and taxes, totaled 23.83 percent. Approximately 29.09 percent were of the opinion that the intifadah has had an influence on the cohesiveness of the social situation, while 8.08 percent of the sample attributed the cause of this cohesion to other miscellaneous reasons. Some examples include:

- Recent years have increased bonds and have worked to increase love and harmony among men;
- The human's instinctive desire to remain close to his family;
- Emergence of social awareness;
- Love, cohesiveness, and integration; and,
- Sensitivity to the circumstances in which we live.

Education

When the opinion poll's sample was questioned about their opinion of the level of education in the Gaza Strip, 45 percent responded that it was poor, while 36.76 percent said it was very poor. Those who expressed the view that the education was more than acceptable, or good to very good, totaled 14.54, 3.83, and 0.6 percent respectively.

When they were asked to clarify their views with regard to ways of improving and developing education so as to be in tune with the political conditions in which the Palestinian people live, 86.48 percent said that the opening and continuity of schools and universities that the authorities shut down with the outbreak of the intifadah and even before 1986, was the basic element for improving education.

On the other hand, 28.48 percent of individuals polled expressed the belief that it was the duty of the students' legal guardians to take care of their children and their education in the home. Other ways to raise the educational level by means of open [free] education by responsible educational authorities, were held by 17.17 percent of the sample. With regard to popular education, 21 percent expressed the opinion that it was a successful and good method, while 20 percent thought that there were other means to develop education, including:

- Teachers with higher qualifications;
- Prohibit cheating on examinations;
- Eliminating the principle of special studies for material gain;
- Cooperation between teachers and students;
- Libraries;
- Establishing study groups;
- Lifting restrictions on books and cultural freedom;
- Participation of media in education;
- An authority to look after the people's interests;
- Ending teachers' lack of discipline and putting restrictions on students;
- Checking on teachers and investigating them more carefully;
- Working on schools' capabilities for self-education;
- Developing the students' concept of education;
- Maintaining study during days of strikes and keeping problems out of schools;

- Refraining from any action that infringes on education;
- Committing students, making them bear responsibility, and making them understand the importance of education in the life of every Palestinian.

When the polling sample was asked for their evaluation of the curriculum, 48.08 percent emphasized that it was unsuitable and must be exchanged for something harmonious with Palestinian culture and the general Palestinian situation, especially social material such as history and geography. Approximately 40.2 percent expressed the belief that the curriculum was unsuitable and must be changed. As for those who opined that the curriculum was appropriate for local culture, they were 11.11 percent of the sample's total. In addition, there were other views expressed evaluating the curriculum. Some 5.45 percent of the sample stated that it was necessary to:

- Concentrate on social material, especially history and geography;
- Deal with the Palestinian situation through a program supervised by Palestinian specialists;
- Make the curriculum Islamic in its values.

Political Situation

Citizens' thoughts concerning the political situation and its effect on the Palestinian case range between bad and acceptable. Approximately 72.72 percent of citizens polled expressed the view that the political situation was bad, while 24.84 percent said that the political situation was acceptable. This pertained to the deterioration of Arab and world conditions vis-a-vis the Palestinian issue and people, particularly following the Gulf war. Those who expressed the opinion that the political situation was good totaled 13.93 percent of the sample.

Concerning citizens' views about the possibility of resolving the Palestinian issue, 61.41 percent of the poll's sample stated that a solution could only come about through applying international law and implementing UN resolutions pertaining to the Palestinian issue, without resorting to a double standard. As for the possibility of solving the Palestinian issue by means of holding elections in the occupied territories, 3.83 percent of those polled held this view. As for those expressing the opinion that the American peace-making solution and [Secretary of State] Baker's shuttle diplomacy among the parties to the dispute was the best solution for this issue, no more than 0.8 percent were of this opinion. The share of those who support holding the regional conference and who saw this as a possible way to resolve the Palestinian case was 1.01 percent.

When the poll's sample was questioned about the concept of international law, 57.57 percent expressed the belief that the law means the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish their independent state. Some 70.70 percent stressed that they prefer the Palestinian political initiative and demand

that the PLO adhere to it and work for its implementation along with other concerned parties, in order to reach the best solution for the Palestinian problem.

Concerning proposals such as a confederation or federal union with Jordan, 11.51 percent of the individuals stated that this type of solution must come after the establishment of the Palestinian state. Only 1.41 percent expressed the opinion that a tripartite Palestinian-Jordanian-Israeli confederation should be established. As for autonomy in accordance with the Camp David Accords, 0.6 percent of the total poll sample believed in the possibility of self-government occurring.

With regard to the possibility of coexistence with Israel, 54.54 percent expressed the view that coexistence was possible, while 42.62 percent said there was no possibility of coexistence with Israel. This reflects the Palestinian viewpoint that leans toward the idea of peaceful coexistence with Palestine's neighbors, regardless of political animosity between them.

When those polled were asked about whether the American solution would be in the Palestinian people's best interests, 94.54 percent of the sample responded in the negative, while 5.65 percent answered yes. This reflects the citizens' fear vis-a-vis the American position and its lack of seriousness with regard to the concept of international law, which means the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish their independent state.

Final Word of Praise

These poll results were obtained in various Gaza Strip areas after the Gulf war. Before we conclude this study, we would like to take this opportunity to convey our deepest thanks to those who responded, filled out the questionnaire, and expressed their opinions. We consider that something to be proud of. We value this step of theirs, and we also thank that group of brothers who took part in the distribution and success of this poll.

Drought Creates Agricultural Crisis on West Bank

91WN0680Z Jerusalem AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASI
in Arabic 27 Jul 91 pp 28-31

[Article by Khalid 'Ammar: "Crisis Threatens Thousands of Agricultural Dunams, Foreshadows Economic and Human Crisis in Lower Jordan Valley"]

[Text] Jericho—The agricultural sector in our country faces a severe crisis that developed over the last eight years, threatening unprecedented economic and human disaster. The crisis involves increasing agricultural operating costs and a lack of open markets to absorb production. Prices have therefore dropped. Taxes and accompanying repressive measures against farmers and vegetable dealers have been imposed. Vehicles have been impounded, produce has been confiscated, and fines sometimes exceeding the value of goods have been

imposed. Natural disasters have left enormous losses in their wake. In addition, farmers are experiencing difficult conditions materially and psychologically—conditions that have negatively affected all other services of daily life, since agriculture is an important connecting link in the local economy. These factors have had an obvious and conspicuous effect on the rising unemployment rate. On the one hand, many workers have become redundant because of the decreasing agricultural area; on the other hand, other sources of income are not available.

According to registers of the Jericho Cooperative Society for Marketing Agricultural Crops, more than 1,600 officially registered farmers on the society's lists and thousands of others not registered have now, along with their families, become threatened with having to leave farming and their livelihood.

Today the water crisis heads the list of the aforementioned problems. It is a specter that threatens the coming agricultural season and the future of farming in the region.

The water crisis has become a subject of conversation for everyone, especially farmers. Some wells' flows have decreased; others have become more saline; others have dried up. Farmers are worried. Owners of wells are living in uncertainty and have made no decision about the coming season. Some will decrease the area planted; others will abstain from planting; others will rethink their plans; others will look for the best solution. Everyone is groping about aimlessly. The farmers are like drowning men grasping at straws.

Hajj Shafiq Bali, a major farmer, operates the Jawdat Sha'sha'ah farm in Jericho. He said that farming has become fraught with dangers because of the prevailing circumstances. The water crisis is one of the greatest problems threatening agriculture at present. Despite increasing expenditures to extract water using pumps that run on high-priced electricity, many wells have gone dry or have been ruined. The flow from many wells has decreased, or they have become more saline. As an example of this, Hajj Shafiq said that there used to be six wells in good operating order on the farm. Today, four are working, and two are out of commission. The flow from the four wells has decreased as follows:

- from 70 to 12 cubic meters/hour at present,
- from 35 to 15 cubic meters/hour at present,
- from 100 to 42 cubic meters/hour at present, and
- from 80 to 60 cubic meters/hour at present.

Hajj Shafiq Bali said that these wells used to irrigate over 500 dunams and support dozens of laborers and farmers. Conditions today do not permit this. There is a new plan to change the type of farming. One could rely on greenhouses to decrease the area planted and thus decrease expenses and prevent the wasting of water. Giving an example of this, Hajj Shafiq said: "Last season, one of my farmers spent 6,000 Jordanian dinars on electricity. The total yield of the farm at the end of the season was

1,500 dinars. In other words, the total yield for the season did not cover the farmer's electricity bills." Hajj Shafiq asked, "How can we continue going on this way? We don't want to go on losing. We farm in order to live, and we can't live under the shadow of these successive losses." Hajj Shafiq is considering not embarking on the next planting season. He is thinking of not operating the wells, if conditions remain as they are.

Unprecedented Crisis

Basil al-Husayni, a large landowner and farmer in Jericho, where he plants more than 500 dunams of vegetables and bananas, believes farmers are undergoing an unprecedented crisis. Many have been led to leave the farm. He noted that more than 35 farmers had been farming for him; now there are about 15. He stated that if conditions remain as they are, it finally will lead to a serious disaster. Al-Husayni closed by saying, "The water crisis is a big problem today. Water sources have been strikingly affected for many reasons, especially the weather factor." He added that he owns three artesian wells. They used to pump 300 cubic meters/hour, but this dropped by 30 percent in recent years. Basil al-Husayni said that the water problem could be solved by digging very deep wells. This requires a permit from the authorities, something that is usually met with refusal, especially if the application is to dig to a depth exceeding 80 meters. Even if digging is allowed, it costs a lot. Digging one meter costs 400 Jordanian dinars. This requires allocating enormous budgets that farmers or the well owner cannot provide. Furthermore, the digging operation is a gamble, because one cannot be certain of the quantity or quality of the water.

Basil al-Husayni advises farmers not to plant during the first crop cycle, because it consumes large quantities of water. They should rely on rainy-season agriculture.

Al-Husayni went on to say, "The European market, which promised farmers aid, should stand beside them, especially at this time, and rescue them by providing summer assistance and solving the water and other problems." Al-Husayni called on the appropriate responsible bodies not to delay in offering the aid that will make it feasible for farmers to continue farming and guarantee sustenance to their family members. To overcome the water crisis in the next season, he suggests turning to "protected" agriculture—the use of covered houses—to save water and increase production. He said that the cost of one house for an area of one dunam is about 5,000 dinars. If only the parties interested in helping farmers would take it upon themselves to build these houses and offer them to farmers, they would contribute to rescuing what can be rescued.

There are about 116 artesian wells in the lower Jordan Valley. About 20 of them are not functioning; the rest are still working, but the quantity of water pumped has dropped markedly, and salinity has risen. Many wells need to be maintained and redug, which of course depends on official permission from the authorities.

Well owners say that the authorities will not allow them to dig wells deeper than 100 meters, although the authorities themselves dig wells to a depth of about 500 meters. Well owners attribute the rising salinity to these reasons. They say that ground water in the lower Jordan Valley depends on subterranean aquifers. The quantity of water increases the deeper one goes. Many wells in the lower Jordan Valley were dug by the Israeli authorities after 1967. These wells, which are very close to Arab wells, are operated by very big pumps—the wells near 'Ayn al-'Awja are an example. These, in recent years, have effected the water of 'Ayn al-'Awja and led to its drying up, ruining large areas of agricultural land. Also, the authorities have fixed the quantity of water that can be pumped from Palestinian-owned artesian wells. Mahmud Muslih, a large farmer in the Jericho area, said that they impose high fines on anyone who tries to draw more water than that fixed by the meters.

Muslih said, "If the appropriate parties want to help the farmers, they have to solve the water problem first. Water is the foundation of agriculture. One cannot build without a foundation." He noted that a number of well owners have taken out permits to dig new wells, but they do not have the money to pay for the digging. He cited himself as an example: "For four years I have had a permit to dig a new well 120 meters deep, but I have not yet been able to do so because the money is lacking. He wondered: "We say 'the water crisis.' Why have opportunities for providing water been exhausted?" Muslih suggested that the international community pressure the Israeli authorities to dig a deep well in the area to solve the crisis permanently. He was alluding to the fact that all the Arab wells pump from a shallow level and that this reservoir is threatened with depletion. Even if a small quantity of water can be found, it is unfit because of high salinity and chlorine.

The pumping rate for a single well in the lower Jordan Valley is about 50 cubic meters/hour. The total amount of water available in the lower Jordan Valley, including springs, wells, and artesian wells is 38 million cubic meters/year—30 million cubic meters from springs and wells, and 8 million from artesian wells.

Problem of High Salinity

'Adil [Barbaghayth], director of the Department of Agriculture in Jericho, said that water sources in the lower Jordan region are totally dependent on rain water and weather factors. He added that the crisis in recent years had come about because of these factors. Barbaghayth added that artesian wells began to be dug in the early fifties, but today they face the problem of high salinity or low flow. To overcome this crisis, the director of the Department of Agriculture suggested exploiting the water that goes to waste in the winter season. It should be collected behind dams for use during the hot summer days when the crisis intensifies. This will require very large budgets. Barbaghayth said that farmers must replace open dirt and cement channels with pipes to stop water

loss through evaporation and seepage into the ground. The idea was seconded by Isbir al-Mukarkir, a farmer from al-'Awja.

An agricultural engineer pointed out that technical means could be used in agricultural operations to save water. He explained that reliance on quality and reducing areas gives better results. He said that "covered agriculture" was good and gives excellent results, if the conditions for it are provided—expert supervision, superior care, and the use of modern scientific methods.

Agricultural Engineer 'Isam Adib termed "covered agriculture" too expensive. Only well-to-do farmers would be capable of it. The rate of loss would be higher than from open agriculture, if prices were low during the season. The productivity of a dunam varies from area to area—it is lower in areas of the lower Jordan Valley.

Another agricultural engineer suggested using water that results from domestic use. He said, "Because of hot weather, the inhabitants of Jericho consume large quantities of water for laundry and bathing purposes. We can use this water in agriculture after purifying it."

Modern Methods, Quality

Mansur Khalfah, director of the Jericho Cooperative Society for Marketing Agricultural Crops, advised farmers to follow modern agricultural methods and concentrate on quality in an attempt to ration water. They should take advantage of rain water and plant crops that rely on the [rainy] season. Khalfah stressed the need to exploit rain water and conserve it by building dams and basins.

About 40,000 dunams in the lower Jordan Valley are planted in vegetables, bananas, citrus, and grain, relying mainly on spring and well water. Water sources control the size of the area planted. Farmers plant three crop cycles each year. The first, which begins in mid-September and ends at the beginning of November, is called "the October crop." It needs large quantities of water because of the hot weather that accompanies its planting. The second crop, called "al-[Muhayyirah]," begins in mid-November and continues to the beginning of January. It comes in the winter season, which reduces water consumption. The third crop begins in mid-January or early February and continues until the end of April.

Most farmers now expect to omit the first crop and plant the second and third ones because of the water shortage. This view was favored by farmers Basil al-Husayni, Hajj Shafiq Bali, Mahmud Muslih, Isbir al-Mukarkir, and others.

Detailed Table of Water Sources, Lower Jordan Valley

Jericho Area Springs and Wells

- 'Ayn al-Sultan Spring—average flow for irrigation purposes about 600 cubic meters/hour

- 'Ayn Wadi al-Qilt—average flow from 200 to 250 cubic meters/hour
- 'Ayn al-Nuway'imah—average flow 200 cubic meters/hour
- 'Ayn al-Duyuk—average flow between 350 and 400 cubic meters/hour
- 'Ayn Susah/al-Duyuk—average flow 50 cubic meters/hour.

Jericho Area Artesian Wells

Owner	Working	Inoperative
1. Al-Husayni Family	4	1
2. 'Ariqat Family	1	-
3. Al-Rantisi	1	-
4. Mahmud al-Hamduni	2	-
5. Jawad al-Misri	1	-
6. Bi'r Dahiyat al-Iskan	1	-
7. Bi'r al-Awqaf	2	-
8. Bi'r Dayr Hajalah	1	-
9. Abu-Jubnah	1	-
10. Zuhdi Hashwah	1	-
11. 'Uthman al-Safafi	1	-
12. Fahmi al-Nahhas	2	-
13. Karmilu Nassar	-	1
14. Talib and Sabri Makki	-1	-
15. Abu-Hudud	-	1
16. Muhammad 'Alyan	-	1
17. Salah al-'Arurah (formerly Rashid Hijazi)	1	-
18. Musa Nassar	1	-
19. Sulayman al-Barham	1	-
20. Jamil Sabri Khalaf and Faysal Usa'yid	1	1
21. Antun Nazzal/Khalil al-Shamali	1	-
22. 'Awni Hijazi	2	2
23. Jawdat Sha'sha'ah (supervision of Hajj Shafiq Bali)	4	2
24. Arab Construction Project	11	-
25. Sa'id 'Ala'-al-Din	1	-
26. Muhammad al-Misri	1	-
27. Husayn Shahwan	-	1
28. Bi'r al-Dajjani/al-Nuway'imah	-	1
Total	43	11

Al-'Awja Springs

'Ayn al-'Awja, with a flow of 800 cubic meters/hour. The spring depends primarily on rain water, especially water flowing from mountainous areas and hills. The continuity of its flow therefore depends on the amount of rain in the rainy season. Recently, the spring has begun to dry up early because of deficient water sources and because

the Israeli authorities have dug several deep wells near the springhead. This has effected the water level to some extent. Many experts and farmers have confirmed this. One of these wells is no more than 300 meters away from the springhead and has a depth of hundreds of meters.

Al-'Awja Artesian Wells

All are operative. Their owners are: Jawad al-Dawudi (1), Sabir al-Mukarkir (1), Sulayman al-Mukarkir (1), Subhi al-Dajjani (1), Hasan al-'Amd (1), 'Abd-al-Mu'ti al-Qutb (2), 'Abd-al-Karim al-Nujum (1), the Nusaybah family (1). There are a total of 9 wells.

Al-Jiftlik Springs

The 'Ayn al-Fari'ah project consists of a series of springs with overall water flow of about 600 cubic meters/hour. Among the most important springs feeding the project is 'Ayn Shibli, but there are other springs. Three phases of the project, which pumps water through metal pipes for conservation, have been completed.

Al-Jiftlik Artesian Wells

There are 26 wells, three of them out of operation; their owners are: al-Ma'shar Project/Engineers' Association (2, with 1 inoperative well), Nawwaf al-Damin (1), Burhan al-Damin (2), Sa'd and Shahir al-Damin (1), 'Ali 'Abdallah al-Damin (1), Adham al-Damin (1), Dr. Zahi al-Qamhawi (1), Ma'ruf Abu Samrah (1), Mutalliq al-Duray'i (1), al-Fari'ah Agricultural Station (1, with 1 inoperative well), 'Inad al-misri (1), Wahid al-misri (1), Hamdi Kan'an (1 inoperative well), 'Issa al-Sammadi (1), Abu Shamt (1), Diya' 'Abduh and Safi al-Ghazzawi (1), Fathallah al-misri (1), Mahmud al-'Allan (2), 'Awwad al-[Su'ayidah] (1), and Jawad al-Misri (1).

Al-Fasayil

[The only spring is] 'Ayn al-Fasayil, with a flow of 50-60 cubic meters/hour, and there is one Artesian well owned by Salham al-Nimr.

Al-[Zubaydat]

Al-Zubaydat has five artesian wells, all operating, owned by the following (one well per owner): Jamil Khamis, Sulayman al-Salih, Badi' Yunus, Bi'r Abu Jarrar, and the al-Zubaydat public well.

'Ayn al-Bayda Artesian Wells

There are three wells, all operational, owned by Muhammad 'Abd-Khudrah, Ahmad al-Fuqaha', and the al-Zu'bi well.

'Ayn al-Bayda Springs

Several exist, with a total flow of about 300 cubic meters/hour. The most important are Upper and Lower 'Ayn al-Shamsiyah, 'Ayn al-Bayda, 'Ayn al-Muhaydiriyat, 'Ayn al-Dayr, 'Ayn Bulaybil, and 'Ayn Qur'an.

'Ayn Kardalah

'Ayn Kardalah has a flow of eight cubic meters/hour.

Furush Bayt Dajan

Furush Bayt Dajan relies on a total of eight artesian wells, four of which are operating. They belong to Nash'at al-Misri, Hafiz al-Shak'ah, Tawfiq 'Abd-al-Jalil, Yusuf Shahin, and Hasan al-'Ubaysi. The four wells not operating belong to Samir 'Abd-al-Jalil, Tawfiq al-Yaziji, and the Tammun public well.

Marj Na'jah

There are two public wells for the area, both operating.

Khuzuq Musa

There are two wells belonging to Sulayman al-Salih, one not operating.

Bardalah

Bardalah has four working wells belonging (one well per owner) to Muhammad Nimr al-Hasan, Sa'id al-Mansur, the al-Qifaf well, and the Bardalah public well, which yields 180 cubic meters/hour.

Conclusion

A total of about 40,000 dunams of land in the lower Jordan Valley are planted with vegetables, grain, citrus, and bananas using water from springs, wells, and artesian wells. Water resources control the expansion or contraction of the cultivated area. Hundreds of thousands of dunams in the occupied territories are not farmed because insufficient water is available. The farmed area now threatens to decrease if the water shortage crisis continues to worsen. As a result, thousands of Palestinian families who support themselves from this sector will be deprived of a living and join the ranks of the unemployed. Other economic sectors will also be affected, as they are directly linked to agriculture.

If the situation remains unchanged, it will constitute a dangerous sign of an impending disaster more human than economic. My belief is that the water crisis will become more and more serious. It has indeed become a regional crisis, with water becoming more valuable than oil. The realities indicate that the next war—God forbid—will be a war for water.

For as God has said: "We made every living thing from water" [Koran 21:30].

Phenomenon of Widespread Theft Examined

91AE0493A Jerusalem AL-USBU' AL-JADID in Arabic
1 Jul 91 pp 46-47

[Article: "Theft, A Dangerous Phenomenon; Must Be Resolutely Countered"]

[Text] We can hardly read the daily papers without finding one or more items about thefts here and there in

all parts of the occupied territory. This phenomenon—the phenomenon of theft—has gotten out of control in our society, unfortunately, and has become one of the problems that burden honest and virtuous persons. Since the beginning, citizens have known the secret of the emergence of this problem at this particular time. They understand that behind it lies an unseen party, which aims at smashing these people, and creating havoc in their ranks.

Suspicious Persons Attack Citizens' Property To Create Chaos and Destroy Unity

AL-USBU' AL-JADID went out among the citizens to find out about this problem and attempt to investigate causes and devise solutions. We thought we would get examples of specific kinds of theft, in order to alert citizens. In order to protect some of those whom AL-USBU' AL-JADID interviewed, we refrain from mentioning their names, because this problem was difficult to discuss, in their opinions.

One of the citizens had his car stolen. It is a Peugeot 305. He went to the town of [Yata] in the Hebron district, and made inquiries!

In fact, it was in [Yata]. Through a go-between, he was able to sit at a negotiating table with gang members in a private place. At the end of the session, agreement was reached to pay 400 Jordanian dinars in exchange for the car's return. He paid the amount, and got it back. The car's owner said: "I saw with my own eyes that before them on the table, and in their hands, were 'suspicious materials' required by gang members."

Another citizen's car was stolen. He learned where it was and the criminals who had stolen it. Through a go-between, who was probably one of them, they gave him a substitute car with the same motor number—a spurious car. He was then asked for a sum of money in exchange for its return. After they sensed, in their own way, that—according to his statement—he was unwilling to pay the bribe, they denied having the car.

One of them robbed a shop and was arrested redhanded. His name and identity card number were recorded. He then contacted charitable people, where the matter was settled, in exchange for the thief paying 200 dinars and returning the goods. The shop owner said that he was satisfied with this arrangement because, under the present circumstances, he could do any better than this. He was content to say: "I am content with God; our Lord is great and all-seeing. We entrust our affairs to God."

Other Kinds

Acts of thievery have not been restricted to cars and shops; they have also included stealing from chicken coops, sheep folds, stealing laundry from the roofs of buildings, valuable furniture from houses, etc. Finally, one gang crowned its work by robbing the bone clinic in al-[Muqasid] Hospital in Jerusalem. al-Muqasid is a clinic located in a national health facility that offers treatment for all groups of people, including infants,

young people, women, and the elderly. It might have provided medical treatment one day for the person who robbed it. Why rob that? What does it prove?

Professor Khalid [Jabbarayn], Social Science Specialist

"Theft is a deviant social phenomenon that demonstrates abnormal behavior. It is not confined to a specific generation, which means that it occurs through all ages, starting with childhood. It results from lack of behavioral pressure and educational and social supervision in the environment in which the deviant lives. Deviation has encouraging factors, which are concentrated in the environment and the method of social upbringing in which the deviant is found.

"In our present circumstances, the absence of national authority is an encouraging factor, fertile ground for spreading the phenomenon of various deviations, including theft. According to my theory, there are factors reinforcing the problem of thievery at the present time. These factors are represented by exploitation of the poor economic situation that prevails in the area and the negative effects left behind by the Gulf war on the economic situation, which has led to increased poverty and unemployment. Another factor is the lack of a specific agency to combat the problem. On the contrary, we would be remiss if we did not mention the tendency to find negative phenomena in Palestinian society, which, in the final analysis, leads to fragmentation of the unity of the Palestinian community and to loss of trust among members of society themselves. We should note that theft is strongly linked to other negative facets, which we lack the room to mention. The upshot is that all these negative phenomena are aimed at destroying Palestinian society."

Concerning treatment, al-Jabbarayn replied that the solution is on two levels:

- The masses' level. The masses' consciousness should be raised concerning this problem, its dangers and goals, and the perpetrators should be unmasked and destroyed on all levels.
- The official level. There should be efforts made to create specialized institutions to combat phenomena like this, through the holding of conferences and forums.

"In addition, there is the possibility of forming popular committees in town districts, villages, and Palestinian refugee camps to put an end to this problem and to follow up and deal with it.

"It is worth noting that certain thefts are veiled. In this case, the purpose is to do damage to the national effort in general, because theft is incompatible with nationalism.

"On the other hand, I cannot see stealing from chicken farms or gain from the driver of a rental car, as a glorious, material profit. On the contrary, these acts prove that it is provocation with regard to national endeavors and agitation of problems among the population."

Citizen 'Amad 'Abdallah: "In the course of the intifadah, there was control over the general behavior of citizens. There was an obligation on their part. This small group of people—the thieves—hide in their lairs, waiting for the opportunity to emerge again, after the events that shook the region and the developments that occurred in the occupied territory."

Hamid al-Hasan, one of the reformers in the Bethlehem area, said: "In recent times, we have been working to resolve certain problems with thefts. This happens when the thief is identified. In such cases, we try to bring all our weight to bear, at this critical juncture, on the family and relatives of the thief to deter him, put an end to his activities, and make him take responsibility for his attack on people's property and his abuse of the sanctity of their homes and shops."

He told a story about a person who committed a robbery and was arrested. He was asked to pay 5,000 dinars as his punishment, along with returning the items stolen from a shop in the city. After intervention from here and there, the amount was reduced to 1,000 dinars, paid by his relatives, who forced him to return the merchandise.

Abu Sulayman stated: "We are striving to prosecute the thief Bedouin-style. How is that done? If a man in a house has a problem between himself and his wife or his son, they adjudicate among themselves. We must be united in our efforts—reformers, journalists, and national and popular forces—to do our part to put an end to this phenomenon, whose goals everyone knows, as well as those who stand behind them."

Hasn't the time come to stop this comedy by a gang outside of the national ranks of this people? Should the "bats of the night" be able to continue this destructive program, and for how long? Must we allow this phenomenon to become routine behavior in this society? For how long will we continue to hear and read in the newspapers about crime and robbery?

Through the pages of AL-USBU' AL-JADID, we implore all sincere and honest men to work on all levels to cut off the roots of corruption and the corrupt, bring down the severest punishments on them, and try to pressure the relatives to take their responsibility and not shirk their duty.

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